

Message Text

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44

ACTION NEA-13

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03

SS-20 USIA-15 EB-11 COME-00 INT-08 FEA-02 OMB-01

TRSE-00 CIEP-02 DRC-01 /141 W

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R 220741Z JAN 74

FM AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5153

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

CONFIDENTIAL TEHRAN 0540

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ENRG, IR

SUBJ: COMMENT ON COLLAPSE OF IBRAMCO PROJECT

REF: TEHRAN 6277

1. IN REFTEL PARA 6 WE REPORTED THAT NIOC DOUBTED LIEGE REFINERY PROJECT WOULD BE CARRIED OUT. AFTER FIRST FLUSH OF INTEREST, WE BELIEVE NIOC HAS BEEN UNIFORMLY UNENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT LIEGE PROJECT, PARTICULARLY AFTER SHAH DIRECTED THAT NIOC POLICY WOULD BE, FIRST, TO BUILD EXPORT REFINERIES IN IRAN (GERMAN, AMERICAN AND JAPANESE PROJECTS) AND SECOND, TO ACQUIRE EQUITY AND MANAGEMENT PARTICIPATION IN INTEGRATED RPT INTEGRATED DOWNSTREAM OPERATIONS.

2. PROJECT WAS ONLY KEPT ALIVE, IT APPEARS TO US, BY PRESSURE FROM PM HOVEYDA, ESPECIALLY FOLLOWING WOOB PM LEBURTON'S VISIT TO TEHRAN LAST YEAR. NIOC EXECUTIVES WHILE CAUTIOUS IN DISCUSSING DOWNSTREAM PROJECTS WITH THIRD PARTIES, GENERALLY EVINCED SKEPTICISM ABOUT ECONOMIC FEASIBILITY OF IBRAMCO, AND SEEMED TO FEEL PROJECT OVERLY ENMESHED IN BELGIAN DOMESTIC POLITICS.

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3. AGAINST THIS BACKGROUND AND CONSIDERING INCREASING TENDENCY

FOR GOI TO EXHIBIT IRRITATION WITH FOREIGNERS WHO NEGOTIATE
TOO SLOWLY (E.G. THE JAPANESE), WE ARE SOMEWHAT SURPRISED THAT
GOI AGREED TO EXTEND JAN. 1 DEADLINE. NIOC CLEARLY FELT THAT
GOB FAILURE TO COME UP WITH UNAMBIGUOUS DECISION BEFORE JAN.
15 WAS LAST STRAW.
HELMs

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NNN

Message Attributes

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Decapton Date: 01 JAN 1960
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